60 comments. Most comments addressed the zoonotic characteristic of *Brucella abortus,* i.e. the disease can be transmitted from animals to humans, and how the presence of brucellosis in bison and other wildlife continues to pose a human health threat. Other comments described the potential risk as much lower and questioned the intensity of the 'outcry' from the livestock industry. See related comments in Bison - Brucellosis Transmission, and Public Perception.

Comment 1

"Brucellosis is a Public Health Threat. The primary reason Brucellosis is of such concern in bison, cattle, and other species is because of the possible spread to humans through a variety of potential contacts (infected milk, placentae from infected females, infected tissues at slaughter, etc.). Brucella abortus causes undulant fever in humans, a devastating disease for the individual patient with many potentially life-threatening 'sequelae'." - Individual, Davis, CA, YELL-11057.

Comment 2

"One of them has said let's eradicate brucellosis and solve the problem and I have a question, what is the problem? Is the transmission of brucellosis the problem, are cattle being infected with brucellosis, are people becoming infected with brucellosis at a high rate or is the problem the way that the state veterinarian can arbitrarily and capriciously hold the livestock operators hostage without due process? I think that's the issue and that's the problem,…" - Organization, National Wildlife Federation, YELL-15245.

Comment 3

"Attempts by some to characterize this issue as one involving risks to human health is a gross misrepresentation of the threat to humans from brucellosis in bison and seems intended only to create a climate of fear in which to force certain management actions. The DEIS devotes less than one page to the topic in the Affected Environment chapter, and acknowledges in the Environmental Consequences chapter that bison management poses no risk to the general public. The 1998 National Research Council report [states] that human brucellosis is uncommon today in North America…We suggest the section in the Affected Environment chapter be expanded to include reference to the fact the U.S. Center for Disease Control no longer requires reporting of undulant fever because of the small number of cases. The chapter should display the number of recent cases of undulant fever in Montana, Wyoming, and Idaho and the suspected sources of the infections. It should also put the cases in the context of the thousands of hunters handling elk and bison, dozens if not hundreds of people who have handled bison carcasses in the field, dozens of slaughter-house workers who have also handled bison carcasses." - Organization, Greater Yellowstone Coalition, YELL-15420.

Comment 4

"If all that is written about this threatening disease is true, surely the health and safety of the hunters, their families, and others who may eat the infected meat is by far of greater value than revenue generated by the sale of hunting licenses for diseased game." - Individual, St. Paul, MN, YELL-9071.

Comment 5

"Deward Walker, a noted anthropologist, has estimated that 90% of the historical diet of the Nez Perce people was from fish and wild game…The Nez Perce people need all the native foods we can get to maintain our health. It is hard to underscore the importance of developing bison here or receiving carcasses of slaughtered animals to pursue a healthy lifestyle. We feel bison could help us maintain our health in a very real way. Possibly even reduce health provider costs over the long term. RECOMMENDATIONS/ CONCLUSIONS: In addition to the citing of the employment, per capita income statistics and poverty statistics, the SEIS [sic] should also research health concerns with the Indian Health Service to reference statistics about the incidence of diabetes, heart problems and other health problems among the Tribes affected by this decision as compared with the population at large." - Tribe, Nez Perce Tribe, YELL-11409a.

Comment 6

"The DEIS only recognizes the health risk to individuals involved in the bison management plan. The DEIS does not evaluate the direct risks from contact with aborted fetuses, infected placenta and contaminated ground or water for anyone who travels through the bison's range. Nor has the DEIS evaluated the indirect risk of exposure to brucellosis from scavengers such as coyotes and bears that feed on infected fetuses or placentas or from exposure to cattle, bison or elk should brucellosis spread from the containment area." - Public Agency, State of Vermont Dept. of Agriculture Food & Markets, YELL-7485.

Comment 7

"Throughout the document the acknowledgment that there is increasing numbers of humans along with increasing numbers of bison and elk make it practically certain that human brucellosis will result. Should diagnosis be delayed, those humans will come to know the true meaning of Undulant Fever and its resulting crippling effects. Once again, the National Park Service should be held accountable as the managers of a diseased herd that could have and should have been controlled." - Organization, Idaho Farm Bureau, YELL-11433.

Comment 8

"The statement 'the general public would be at no risk of contracting the disease from bison. However, people responsible for carrying out proposed bison management actions … could be at moderate risk,' is unequal in merit compared to the statements 'Hunters could also be at some risk.

Recipients of auctioned or donated meat could be at minor risk…'." - Individual, Fishkill, NY, YELL-113.

Comment 9

"In spite of an alleged threat of brucellosis to human health, the state of Montana sold as 'property' the carcasses of bison killed in the winter of 1996-97 and pocketed $185,763 in proceeds. Why was this sale allowed if there is so much danger? Also, why kill bull bisons since they do not give birth?" - Individual, St. Paul, MN, YELL-14261.

Comment 10

"Once again, the lack of information is very disturbing. Two very important points need to be included in any discussion regarding human health and brucellosis in the Yellowstone area. As verified in the NAS report, the Centers for Disease Control no longer consider undulant fever a reportable disease…and this has nothing to do with the Brucellosis Eradication Program, it is a result of pasteurizing milk. However, one management scenario would greatly increase the likelihood of humans contracting brucellosis. Many in the livestock industry have called for the immediate vaccination of bison with the old Strain 19 vaccine…there are occasional accidents with the administration of a vaccine and if Strain 19 were accidentally injected into a human or sprayed into their face, infection would occur and the result is undulant fever. The NAS report is quite clear on this aspect, reporting: It (strain 19) has several disadvantages: it is infectious for and causes disease in humans…' (NAS - page 90)." - Organization, National Wildlife Federation, YELL-14819.